



Have a drink without lighting up

One of the most common reasons why people who have stopped smoking start again involves the use of alcohol.

Some people believe a drink and a smoke just go together. If drinking alcohol triggered your desire to smoke, you can expect to feel very tempted when you're drinking.

Don't be caught off-guard. If you know what to expect ahead of time, you can prepare yourself.

Many former smokers still enjoy a drink. It's not easy at first, but it can be done.

Wondering how you can drink and still stay smoke-free? Here are some tips...

- ▶ When you first stop smoking, the smartest thing to do is to avoid alcohol for a while—maybe the first few weeks-- the period of time when staying away from cigarettes takes all your effort and determination.
- ▶ Don't set yourself up to fail! Have fruit juice instead of soda pop, or drinksoda without caffeine. Or, choose non-alcoholic beer or wine. Many mixed drinks have nonalcoholic versions.
- ▶ Don't drink when you're alone; you may be even more tempted to light up just to have that cigarette keep you company when you're by yourself.
- ▶ As you become more comfortable as a non-smoker, socialize with family and friends who don't smoke.
- ▶ Before you go out, remind yourself that you will not smoke. Tell yourself that you are a non-smoker and cigarettes are not an option for you today.
- ▶ Limit your alcohol intake. Have a drink and make your second non-alcoholic. Hold your beverage in the hand you always used to hold your cigarette. Play with a straw or swizzle stick if you need an oral substitute.
- ▶ Don't drink on an empty stomach.
- ▶ Tell your drinking buddies you've quit and ask them not to offer you cigarettes.



When you know you will be with smoking friends, practice turning down the offer of a cigarette beforehand. Be prepared for someone to say, "Go ahead, one won't hurt you!" Remember that one WILL hurt you.

Nicotine has programmed your brain forever. It only takes a puff or two to lead you right back to your full-blown addiction.

Don't let all your hard work and struggles go to waste.



Alcohol: How to set limits

If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation. Moderation means:

- ▶ **For men:** no more than two drinks per day.
- ▶ **For women:** no more than one drink per day.

A person may be at risk for alcohol-related problems if alcohol consumption is:

- ▶ Men: greater than 14 drinks per week, or greater than 4 drinks per day.
- ▶ Women: greater than 7 drinks per week, or greater than 3 drinks per day.

A Moderate Drinker...

- ▶ considers an occasional drink to be a small, though enjoyable, part of life.
- ▶ has hobbies, interests, and other ways to relax and enjoy life that do not involve alcohol.
- ▶ usually has friends who are moderate drinkers or nondrinkers.
- ▶ generally has something to eat before, during, or soon after drinking.
- ▶ usually does not drink for longer than an hour or two on any particular occasion.
- ▶ usually does not drink faster than one drink per half-hour.
- ▶ feels comfortable with his or her use of alcohol (never drinks secretly and does not spend a lot of time thinking about drinking or planning to drink).

Some Reasons to Cut Down on Drinking...

- ▶ To consume fewer empty calories.
- ▶ To sleep better.
- ▶ To be independent (able to legally drive your vehicle).
- ▶ To feel better (no more hang-overs).
- ▶ To save money.
- ▶ To be happier (alcohol is a depressant).
- ▶ To participate more in activities that are not associated with drinking.



Tips for **SLOWER** drinking

- ▶ **S**mall drinks, i.e. a small glass or bottle instead of a pint. A single instead of a double.
- ▶ **L**ease your glass down between sips, and leave it empty for a while before getting another.
- ▶ **O**ccupy yourself. Play pool, music, dance, chat.
- ▶ **W**hy stick to water to break up your alcoholic drinks? Try alcohol-free beers, wines, cocktails. Very effective for getting people off your case too.
- ▶ **E**at before and while you drink.
- ▶ **R**ounds should be avoided. If it's too awkward, then buy yourself a water when it's your turn.